

Otipacimo

Storyteller



SPRING
SEEGWAN

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2024

BE PREPARED

When an emergency happens in your community, planning ahead makes a big difference

LOVE YOUR LANGUAGE

Language and culture lessons from the Anishinaabewaadiziwin Team



Gardening 101

Dig in and get your hands dirty. Find out what it takes to make a community garden.

www.slnha.com

Thunder Bay Clients

If you need a ride and are not a Wequedong Client, SLFNHA will drive you!



Sioux Lookout
First Nations
Health Authority

How to get a ride:

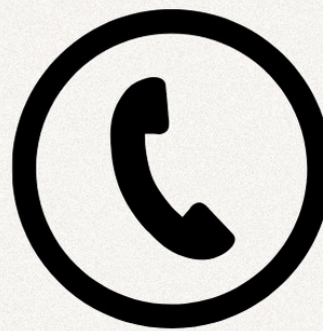
- Locate a Meno Weecheeeway Patient Navigator or SLFNHA Van at the airport
- Go to the SLFNHA office in the Superior Inn (formerly Victoria Inn) (2nd Floor - Port Arthur Room)
- Look for the vans with a SLFNHA Logo
- Call the dispatch number



Transportation Dispatch:
807-695-5138

Operating Hours:
Monday to Friday 6AM - 2AM
Saturday and Sunday 7AM - 12AM

Scan the QR code to find out how to contact a Meno Weecheeeway Patient Navigator.



Mission

Transforming the health of Anishinabe people across Kiiwetinoong by providing community led services and a strong voice for their community health needs.

Vision

Resilient and healthy Nations supported on their path to wellness.

Values

We value respect, relationships, culture, equality, and fairness. We work to protect the Anishinabe teachings of love, courage, respect, wisdom, truth, honesty, and humility.



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Message From
MONICA HEMEON
Chief Administrative Officer

Spring. Seegwan. A time of rebirth and of new beginnings. And at SLFNHA, we have embarked on a new beginning of our own in an effort to serve you better.

As of April 1, 2024, SLFNHA is offering ground transportation services in Thunder Bay for medical clients (for those NOT staying at Wequedong Lodge). If you need a ride to and from the airport or to any medical appointments, SLFNHA vans will get you there! Visit our website to find out how at www.slnha.com.

Our team has worked hard to get this service off the ground. It meant implementing new infrastructure and systems, securing office space, hiring new staff, and purchasing vehicles – all in a short amount of time. It is not an easy transition, so we thank you for your patience.

With the recent changes in accommodation and transportation in Thunder Bay, our leadership made it clear that we must support community members in the city. Moving forward, we'll continue to work with our stakeholders to explore what that looks like.

While we embark on this new beginning in Thunder Bay, SLFNHA continues to also grow and expand in Sioux Lookout. Last year we opened a new Hostel (the former Sioux Lookout Inn & Suites) and we are excited to be holding a naming ceremony and unveiling in June for the new building, as well as the unnamed Hostel 2 (the former Days Inn).

Our Patient Navigator team, Meno Weecheeeway, has also expanded to Winnipeg. With the existing staff in Sioux Lookout and Thunder Bay, the Meno Weecheeeway Navigators are there to help you out. We have three staff in each location to provide guidance and support for SLFNHA clients who leave their homes and families to access health care outside of their communities. Please reach out to them anytime. They are there for you.

Lastly, you will notice that Otipacimo looks a little different. Our Communications Team has given the quarterly newsletter a refresh, creating a product that has the look and feel of a magazine. As we move forward, we aim to include content that is informational and educational by highlighting SLFNHA programs, a variety of health topics, culture and language resources, and community relevant stories and articles.

As we settle into spring, we remind you all to be safe, especially when out on the land. The shifting seasons can be unpredictable. With that said, I hope you enjoy your time outside with family and friends.



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Gardening 101: Dig in and learn about growing in your community

First Nations communities within Kiiwetinoong maintain strong relationships with the land. Many members continue to harvest food and medicines from the land and water. Some community members also enjoy growing food in gardens. Many communities are planning growing projects to help people live well and enhance current food practices.

Some of these projects include growing fruits and vegetables.

Recently, SLFNHA's Preventing Chronic Diseases (PCD) team hosted its first garden and growing workshop in Thunder Bay. Members from three communities attended.

The training took place at Roots Community Food Center (RCFC). Brendan Grant from Sleepy G Farms led the training. Brendan shared knowledge on soil, and planting seeds. He also talked about starting plants indoors

and the use of greenhouses. Erin Beagle, Executive Director of RCFC, gave a tour of its operations. Participants learned more about the work done with young people, schools, and seniors.

Erin also led a workshop to help community members plan their own gardens. Some participants shared plans to build a family garden at their house. Others shared plans to build community

Download the **SLFNHA Community Garden Implementation Guide** at www.slnha.com/resources or scan the QR Code!



gardens by schools.

Gardening is possible in the north. Community members have been doing it for many years. But there are challenges. These include extreme temperatures and a shorter growing season. This can result in greater risk to crops. Early frosts, and late spring snowfalls can also affect growing.

There are many practices that can support growing success in communities, making local compost to build good soil, collecting rainwater to water plants, building a hoop house addition or greenhouse to extend the growing season.

There are many benefits to starting community gardens. Gardens can teach people new skills. More gardens mean more fresh, local produce for the community. Having more fresh produce to eat can help people live well. Eating a balanced diet with a lot of food from the land can also help prevent chronic diseases like diabetes.

You can find out more about the training and other support by reaching out to the PCD team. You can contact:

Farren Tropea
Family Nutrition Specialist
farren.tropea@slnha.com

Kelly McIntosh
Preventing Chronic Diseases Nutritionist
kelly.mcintosh@slnha.com



Change is in the air

TYRELL MONIAS, Youth Facilitator

Once a year, we witness the renewal of life around us. The plants, the lakes, and the animals all seem to be enchanted with a spell of awakening. The land becomes free from the frozen grips of ice and our bodies feel the movement around us. The water cycle is a concept that is taught at an early age. I remember drawing the different stages of the water cycle for class and drawing the lakes, the clouds, the rain, and snow, and then the runoff of melted ice. In Sioux, not much snow fell throughout the winter, however, as spring was around the corner, a snowstorm hit. There is evidence out there that confirms, we are living in an environmental change. In our communities, the evidence lies within the stories and experiences of Elders, hunters, and gatherers. People notice the change over time and how fast it is. People remember the cold winters and how it stayed cold. With recent weather changes, we must ask ourselves, how are we contributing?

Imagine the universe, the vast emptiness of space and all that's surrounded by its darkest reaches. The sun and our earth are among the stars. We live on this rock, and we are living our lives. A kid looking at ants creating their colony is much like the universe looking at us creating our homes. Our bodies are vessels, which store and use energy. What we put in our body such as water, food, and substances, our body will react to it and create energy. Taking care of ourselves and taking care of the earth will bring long-lasting benefits in wellness. We use this energy, and we give it back to the environment we are in. It's a recycling of energy. We, as people give energy to others, it is seen in our body language, the silence, facial emotes, and the words we express.

Positive and Negative energies are out there in the world, and we are exposed to them. Some people carry these energies within. No one is the same, no one is better. Sometimes, there is a gut feeling people describe when facing uncertain situations. Or have a bad feeling. It's our instincts that tell and detect threats, but our minds are determining how

we should respond. For example, I have anxiety when talking in front of people. The anxiety comes and I acknowledge it. However, I need to plunge right into that feeling to get the job done. It's a feeling of water rushing over me and crashing down like a waterfall. The anxiety, which is instinct, is telling me no. But I am the water rushing over the waterfall and crashing down. It's a ride.

I'm a sensitive person meaning I can sense these energies or in other words read the room. I'm also empathic and in my role I worked with youth who have expressed their feelings, joy, doubts, humour, trauma, and hope. The most important tool I use with anybody is to sit with them in that feeling, without saying much or anything at all. Being with them in that moment, you can feel the air change around you, and it can make others uncomfortable. Nevertheless, I welcome it. These moments, I treasure, like a warm hug from an old friend.

This will be my last article in the role I am in now. I began this journey as a Youth facilitator in June 2021 as the pandemic was in full swing. This was the first job I got out of college and the experience I received has been valuable. I've met so many people who are doing the work. And what I mean by 'the work' is there are people at SLFNHA who are helpers, allies, leaders, healers, advocates, educators, warriors, all here to address the health concerns of Indigenous nations in Kiiwetinoong. All doing it differently and independently of each other or integrated together in teams, and each one is contributing to this greater goal. To the betterment of health for the people of the land.



Nominate your **COMMUNITY HEALTHCARE CHAMPION!**

With the opening and naming of the new Hostel in Sioux Lookout, SLFNHA wants to honour and recognize **Community Healthcare Champions!**



Nominate someone that you feel has contributed greatly to the health and wellbeing of your community. They could be medicine / health providers, helpers, leaders, support workers, counsellors, or more (both historical and present).



Selected individuals will be recognized during a naming ceremony in June and prominently featured in a display at Hostel 3.



This nomination is open to any healthcare hero from within the 33 SLFNHA represented communities.

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Nomination forms can be found at www.slnha.com or by scanning to QR code!



If you have any questions, please reach out to the SLFNHA Communications Department at communications@slnha.com

Being Prepared for Evacuations and Shelter-in-Place Events

When emergencies happen in our communities it can be alarming and difficult to know what to do. Staying calm and listening to instructions from your leadership can be one of the best ways to keep yourself and your family safe. There are two common types of response when an emergency occurs: evacuation or shelter-in-place. Both options aim to keep you safe and well while the emergency is managed.

You may have experienced either an evacuation or a shelter-in-place event before, but here we will share some information on what they are, some tips that can be applied to both evacuation and shelter-in-place, and specific tips for each.

An **evacuation** is a response your community's leadership may choose if remaining at home is dangerous to part or all the community. These can happen due to fire, flood, or loss or failure of infrastructure, such as a water treatment plant failure, and other incidents.

A **shelter-in-place** order can be used for many different reasons, we all experienced the many "lockdown" periods of the pandemic. They can also be ordered by police services if there is a danger



to the community or if there is an environmental concern like a chemical spill or poor air quality due to smoke.

Tips for both evacuation and shelter-in-place:

- Keep a list of medications/backup of medication and contact information for the pharmacy that dispensed it.
- If you require specific foods or food substitutes, maintain a three-day supply.
- Take copies or photos of important documents like identification, vehicle ownership, birth and marriage certificates, or insurance papers and store them in a safe place.
- If you have babies or small children, try to keep at least a three-day supply of any items they may need including diapers, bottles, and clothes.
- Chargers and extra battery packs for cell phones.

Evacuation Tips:

- Typically, luggage limits for evacuations are 40 pounds per person. This can make packing for an unknown amount of time very challenging. Luggage is weighed and oversized baggage will not be loaded, so it is important to follow the weight limits. When packing consider what is essential for you and your family. Laundry is usually available at evacuation sites.
- Pack clothing appropriate for the weather of your host site.
- For young children and infants, pack blankets, diapers or training pants, wipes, bottles, formula (if you use it), clothes, and favourite toys or activities.

- Take any medication as well as a backup list of medications in case you need a refill while evacuated.
- If you have special dietary concerns or allergies, pack a few days' worth of any specialized foods you may need. The evacuation site will provide you with food to meet your needs, but you should be prepared in case you experience travel delays.
- If you wear hearing or vision aids, pack spare batteries, contact solution or backup glasses if you have them.
- Pack toiletries and hygiene supplies.
- Ensure all family members have a list of contact information for each other in case separation accidentally occurs.

Shelter-in-Place Tips:

With shelter-in-place orders, you have the benefit of not having to pack but you will not be able to leave your house until it is safe. Keeping an emergency preparedness kit in your home can be a useful way to prepare for shelter-in-place events.

Items to have in your emergency preparedness kit include:

- 3-4 litres of water per person, for at least 3 days. If you have pets, 1 litre of water per pet for at least 3 days.

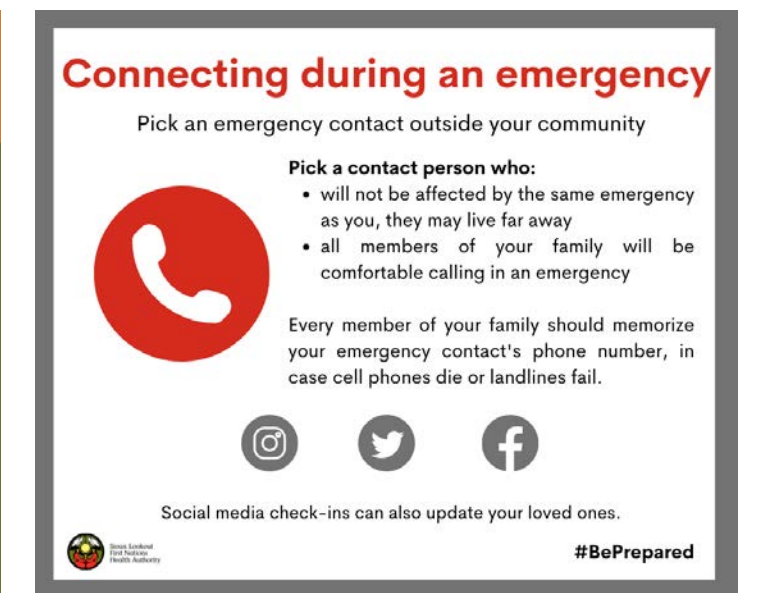
- A stock of non-perishable foods is enough for your household for at least three days.
- If your non-perishable food stock includes canned foods, make sure you have a manual/hand-held can opener (not one that needs electricity).
- Flashlights and spare batteries or hand-crank flashlights.
- Radio and spare batteries to keep in touch with communications.

If any members of your household need special supplies every day, such as contact solutions, medications, diapers, or special foods, keep at least a three-day supply in your emergency kit. Sitting down with your family to figure out what these items are can help you be prepared for possible emergencies.

If the power goes out and you are using a generator to provide your home with electricity **never** use a generator indoors. Generators can produce carbon monoxide which can be fatal if it builds up in your home.

When preparing for possible winter shelter-in-place events, think about how your home is heated and be prepared with stocks of firewood or heating oil.

For more information, email ACWinfo@slfnha.com





Round Dance Time

The Round Dance in Dryden, Ontario on March 13, 2024 was a great evening of singing and dancing!

Miigwetch to all the guests that attended, especially the hockey players and fans who traveled from the northern communities for the Northern Bands Hockey Tournament.

Miigwetch to the singers, stickmen, and MC, who traveled from northwestern Ontario, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Minnesota, to help us put on an amazing night.

Thank you to all the SLFNHA staff who worked hard to make this event a huge success, especially Dieter Sainnawap who took the lead in organizing!

And lastly, thank you to the sponsors who made this event possible: Sioux Lookout First Nations Health Authority, Independent First Nations Alliance, Kenora Chiefs Advisory, Dryden Native Friendship Centre, D&S Auto Glass, SkyCare, and FIREFLY.



EXPERIENCE

Onaman Ziibi

Onaman Ziibi

Recreational Activities

Land-Based & Traditional Teachings

Private Cabins

Large Indoor & Outdoor Space

Meals Included

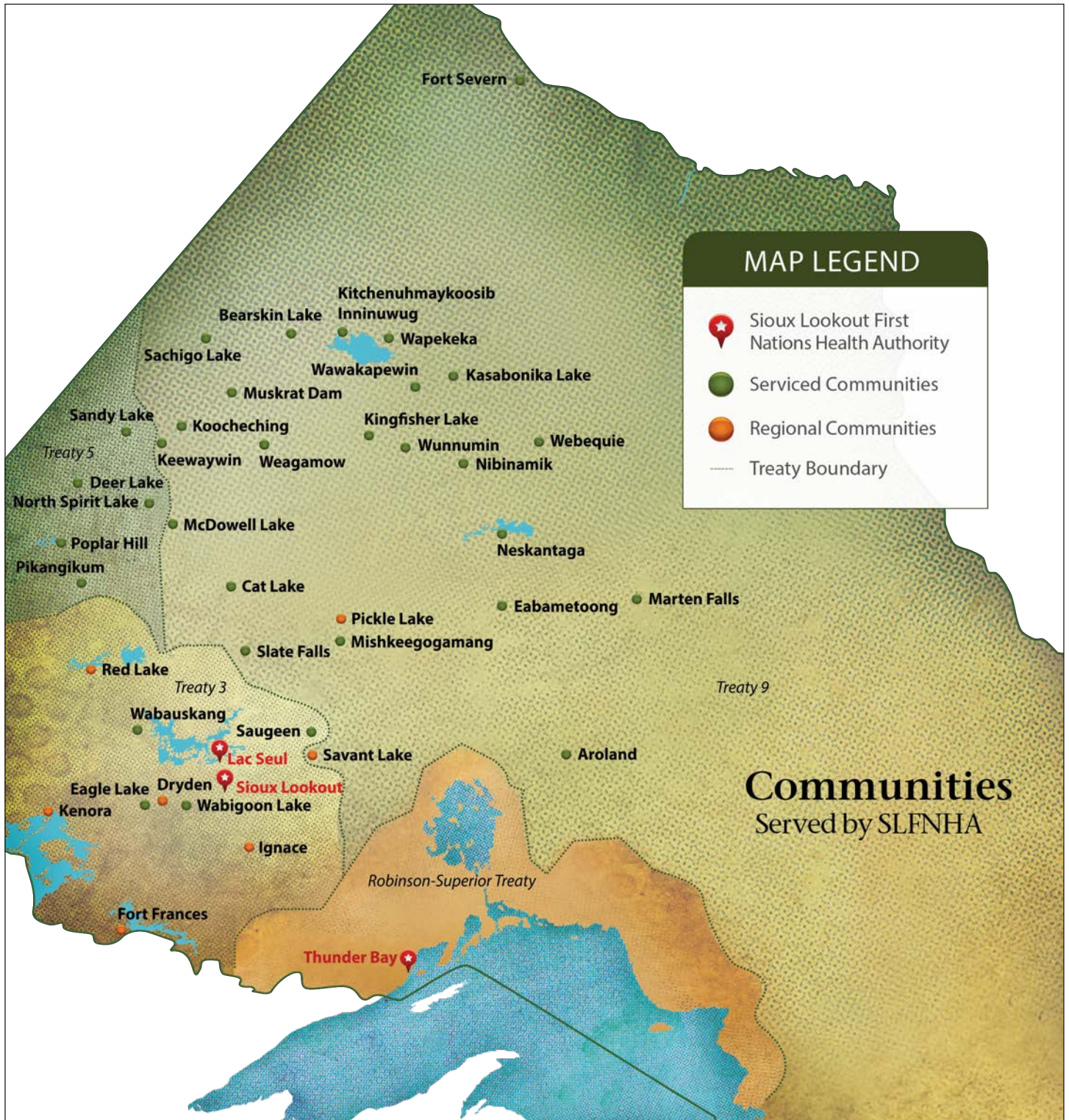
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