



Centre de santé communautaire
CHIGAMIK
Community Health Centre

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Chigamik Community Health Centre Celebrates Community Health and Wellbeing Week, Advocates for Community Health

Evidence shows that Community Health Centres keep people healthier, out of the emergency department, and help save the system money

Midland, Ontario – October 12, 2023 – From October 16 to 22, Centre de santé communautaire Chigamik Community Health Centre (CSC Chigamik CHC) is celebrating [Community Health and Wellbeing Week](#) by inviting the community to take part in a variety of programs open to everyone. The goal of this initiative is to shed light on local programs, services, and community engagement initiatives that build stronger, more resilient and healthier communities across Ontario. This year's overarching theme, *Community Health is Essential*, underscores the crucial role that Community Health Centres play in sustaining community health and wellbeing.

As health care leaders across Ontario and Canada continue to grapple with health system challenges, a growing body of evidence highlights that one of the most important components to transforming our health system for sustainability is access to comprehensive primary health care and health promotion services.

Community Health Centres, first introduced in Ontario in the 1960s, [provide access to comprehensive primary health care for people who experience barriers](#) all across the province in urban, suburban, rural and northern communities. CHCs do this through direct provision of services such as primary care via salaried physicians and nurse practitioners.

Part of the comprehensive care includes a full team of providers that can include: dietitians, social workers, physiotherapists, mental health professionals, peer support workers, system navigators and more. Health promotion, community development and other social and community support services are delivered in many Ontario communities through this integrated model of health and wellbeing. This model allows for people to be cared for by one team, instead of having to navigate sometimes complex referral and continuity of care planning on their own. CHCs also open their doors to the community and provide services and programs to people who do not receive their medical care directly from CHCs.

For a long time, CHCs have flown “below the radar” in the Ontario health system, with persistent questions about costs, benefits and sustainability. Now, the evidence is in – and it consistently shows that CHCs expand access to programs and services overall, better serve marginalized people by improving outcomes and [reducing emergency department use, and overall save health system spending](#). They also help support other allied health care and social services providers to better serve people along the continuum of care.

“Community health is essential. So is wider support for the work it does,” says Suzanne Marchand, Executive Director, CSC Chigamik CHC. “We’re calling on communities, leaders, and healthier community builders, advocates, and champions to join us. Ontario needs to strengthen its community health sector with investments like never before, so they can be ready now, and in the future to serve the health and wellbeing needs of people across the province. To achieve a vision of equitable health and wellbeing for everyone, we have to plan for the health workforce of the future, lead with health equity and improved health for all, and build on what data shows works in our health system – comprehensive, preventative, team-based care that’s integrated with health, social and other community programs and services.”

Throughout Community Health and Wellbeing Week, CSC Chigamik CHC invites community members to learn about their local Community Health Centre and engage with others by participating in the following programs:

Dance Therapy Program

Join Dance Therapist, Rebecca Barnstaple on Monday, October 16th at 1:00 PM for an invigorating one-hour dance therapy program specifically tailored for individuals facing movement disorders such as Parkinson's Disease and Multiple Sclerosis. Care partners and friends are also encouraged to participate.

Community Walk

Join CSC Chigamik CHC staff for a community walk on Thursday, October 19th from 12:00 PM to 12:30 PM. Connect with fellow community members and learn about Chigamik's programs and services from the program facilitators and primary care providers, who will be available to address any questions.

Social Media Spotlight

Connect with us on social media as we highlight the positive impact of our programs and services on the community!

For more information or to schedule an interview, please contact Louise Picot, Communications, CSC Chigamik CHC at louise.picot@chigamik.ca or visit www.chigamik.ca.

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Background: Community Health and Wellbeing Week is coordinated by the Alliance for Healthier Communities of which CSC Chigamik CHC is a member. The Alliance represents 109 Community Health Centres, Indigenous Interprofessional Primary Health Care Organizations, Community Family Health teams and Nurse Practitioner-Led Clinics across Ontario. To learn more, visit allianceon.org.

About CSC Chigamik CHC

Centre de santé communautaire Chigamik Community Health Centre (CSC Chigamik CHC) is a non-profit, community-governed health care organization funded by the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care. It offers bilingual and culturally-sensitive healthcare services and community programs under one roof. It provides services and programs that meet the needs of the English communities living in North Simcoe and the French and Indigenous communities (First Nations, Métis, Inuit) living in North Simcoe Muskoka. CSC Chigamik CHC is a proud member of the North Simcoe Ontario Health Team. For more information, please visit www.chigamik.ca.